

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in the subject application.

Claims 1-7 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2 and 7 are allowed, and claims 4 and 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 6 is objected to because of a grammatical informality. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claim 6 to improve clarity. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to remove the objection to claim 6.¹

Claims 3 and 6 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Sakamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,736,875; hereafter "Sakamoto"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection

In the Amendment filed March 14, 2007, Applicant submitted that claims 3 and 6 would not have been anticipated by or rendered obvious in view of Sakamoto because the cited reference does not teach or suggest "the first and second threshold-value decision elements receive the first and second threshold values from the first and second regulators" as required by amended claims 3 and 6. In particular, Sakamoto (Fig. 5) discloses that the output signals of comparators 22 and 23 (which the Examiner asserts correspond to the claimed regulators) are input to a differential amplifier 24, and the output of the differential amplifier 24 is processed by a reference voltage generator 14 and voltage adders 20 and 21 before being input to discriminators 12 and 13 (which the Examiner asserts correspond to the claimed threshold-value

¹ The Examiner is requested to enter the amendment to claim 6 since it does not raise new issues and places the application in better form for appeal by reducing/simplifying the issues for appeal.

decision elements). On the other hand, as shown in Figure 4 of the present application, the first and second threshold-value decision elements S1 and S2 receive the first and second threshold values V1 and V2 from the first and second regulators R1 and R2.

In response to the arguments for patentability, the Examiner asserts that “the language ‘the first and second threshold-value decision elements receive the first and second threshold values from the first and second regulators’ is fairly broad with respect to the handoff between the elements and does not exclude the possibility of intermediary elements. Therefore, the added language is not sufficient to overcome Sakamoto.”² Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and submits that the claim language does not read on the disclosure of Sakamoto.

Claims 3 and 6 expressly recite “the first and second threshold-value decision elements receive the first and second threshold values from the first and second regulators.” However, the output signals of Sakamoto’s comparators 22 and 23 (which the Examiner asserts correspond to the claimed regulators) are not input to the discriminators 12 and 13 (which the Examiner asserts correspond to the claimed threshold-value decision elements). Instead, the discriminator 12 receives an input voltage $V_1 + \Delta V$ which is output by the voltage adder 20 and the discriminator 13 receives an input voltage $V_1 - \Delta V$ which is output by the voltage adder 21.

Further, the output signals of the comparators 22 and 23 (which necessarily correspond to the claimed first and second threshold values since the Examiner is alleging that the comparators 22 and 23 correspond to the claimed first and second regulators) are input to the differential amplifier 24 which outputs a single voltage signal corresponding to a difference between the output signals of the comparators 22 and 23. Similarly, the reference voltage generator 14

² Office Action at page 4.

receives the voltage signal output by the differential amplifier 24 and outputs a single reference voltage V_1 . Since the differential amplifier 24 and the reference voltage generator 14 each output a single voltage signal, Applicant respectfully submits there is no reasonable way that FIG. 5 of Sakamoto can be considered to disclose that the output signal of the regulator 22 is input to the discriminator 12 or 13 and the output signal of the regulator 23 is input to the discriminator 12 or 13, no matter how broadly the Examiner attempts to construe the claim language.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3 and 6 should be allowable over Sakamoto since the cited reference does not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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